

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for control of an operator-controlled system by a user, comprising the steps of:

providing a graphical user interface in a first mode of operation, wherein a first control element is shown;

receiving an invocation by the user representative of a request for the functionality of the first control element;

determining the current status condition of the first control element among a predetermined plurality of status conditions which includes an inactive control element condition and an active control element condition;

in response to ~~an~~ the invocation of the functionality of the first control element when the current status of the first control element is the inactive control element condition, changing the graphical user interface to a second mode of operation, wherein context-sensitive help information is provided in the graphical user interface;

providing a second control element, the second control element being operable to enable the user to select an automated procedure so as to change the current status of the first control element to a second status condition of the active control element condition;

in response to receiving the selection ~~invocation~~ of the automated procedure, performing the automated procedure so as to cause the status of the first control element to be changed to the second status condition of the active control element condition; and

in response to completion of the automated procedure, changing the graphical user interface to a third mode of operation, wherein the invoked functionality of the first control element is made available to the user; and, changing the appearance of the control element so as to indicate the changeover to the second status condition.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously Presented) The method of **claim 1**, further comprising the steps of

graphically representing the current status condition of the first control element in the graphical user interface.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of **claim 3**, further comprising the step of providing a change in the appearance of the first control element in the third mode of operation corresponding to the change from the first status condition to the second status condition.

5. (Previously presented) The method of **claim 1**, further comprising the step of altering the appearance of at least a portion of the first control element to reflect the status currently set for the first control element relative to the available functionality of the first control element

6. (Previously presented) The method of **claim 5**, wherein the appearance of at least a portion of the first control element is grayed-out during a status condition for the first control element of inactive functionality.

7. (Previously presented) The method of **claim 1**, wherein the context-sensitive help indicates a basis for the first status condition of the first control element.

8. (Previously presented) The method of **claim 1**, further comprising the step of providing a third control element operable by the user for causing the graphical user interface to return to the first mode of operation.

9. (Previously presented) The method of **claim 1**, wherein the invocation of the functionality of the first control element is performed by operation of a cursor-based input system.

10. (Previously presented) The method of **claim 1**, wherein the invocation of the functionality of the first control element is performed by operation of a touchscreen input system.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of **claim 1** wherein the help information comprises an explanation of the inactive control element condition of the first control element.